

Our Spiritual Journey: The Fruit of the Spirit – Cooperating with Him

Scripture Reference: Galatians 5:22-23; II Peter 1:2-11

In Galatians 5:22-23 we are looking for evidence of God's Spirit doing a work in our life, building character in the inner man. This work of God will result in godly behavior, which is a contrast to what the flesh does in its natural condition (Galatians 5:16-21; Ephesians 4:17-23; 5:1-12). When learning this, it is first necessary to examine ourselves to see if Christ is in us, doing this work of grace – producing this fruit (II Corinthians 13:4-5; Philippians 1:9-11; cp. Matthew 7:21-23). Yet, this knowledge of God's work in our lives is not to be received with a passive attitude. We do not just sit there waiting for God to do something in our lives, all the while saying, *"God hasn't given me the victory yet!"* We are constantly told to obey, to seek the ways of God and apply them to our life (Matthew 5:3-20; 7:15-27; Galatians 5:16-26; Ephesians 4:17-32; 5:1-21).

It is at this point that we want to see how Peter describes the practical use of divine means to produce fruit in our lives (II Peter 1:2-11). Using the knowledge of God and the exceeding great and precious promises, we are to become partakers of the divine nature (II Peter 1:2-4). We are to *"add" / "minister" / "supply" / "supplement" / "provide"* key elements to our faith, so that we are fruitful (II Peter 1:5,8). The same Greek word is used in II Peter 1:11 to tell us that God will also *"add" / "minister" / "supply" / "supplement" / "provide"* an entrance into His everlasting / eternal kingdom (cp. James 4:8a *"Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you..."*). This everlasting / eternal kingdom is not just referring to going to heaven, after you die (II Timothy 4:18 *"heavenly kingdom"*). It is about entering into Christ's kingdom, in this life, through the new birth (Matthew 6:9-10; John 3:3 *"see with the mind;"* Acts 28:23-31; Colossians 1:13; 4:11; Romans 14:17-19; Revelation 1:9). The Son of God wants to supply for our spiritual lives abundantly / richly / lavishly (John 10:10; Ephesians 3:14-19; 4:7-8,11-15 cp. II Timothy 2:1).

[See comparison table on next page]

Cooperating with God's Spirit to have a Fruitful Life

Galatians 5:22-23 – His Fruit in Our Lives

Fruit of the Spirit

Love

Joy & Peace

Longsuffering / Patience

Gentleness / Kindness

Goodness

Faith / Faithfulness

Meekness / Gentleness
(submissive, teachable servitude)

Temperance / Self-Control

II Peter 1:2-11 – Add to our Faith

Through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord... Exceeding great and precious promises: that by these you might become partakers of the divine nature... (II Peter 1:2-4)

Love (II Peter 1:7 cp. I Corinthians 13:1-8a)

Knowledge...Faith (II Peter 1:2,5 – Joy and peace come through believing (Romans 15:4,13; Psalm 19:8; Isaiah 26:3). Note the peace of assurance given in II Peter 1:8-11 (*“give diligence / be diligent / make every effort”* – II Peter 1:10)

Patience / Perseverance / steadfastness (II Peter 1:6)

Brotherly kindness / mutual affection (II Peter 1:7)

Goodness / virtue / moral excellence (II Peter 1:5)

Godliness [Greek = Devout – a Godward attitude] (II Peter 1:6)

Giving all diligence, add... (II Peter 1:5)

Temperance / self-control (II Peter 1:6)